

2008-09 to 2010-11

NTC Strategic Plan



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Introduction

Following a series of focus group sessions in April/May 2007 the NTC developed and released for comment a 'Strategic Directions' discussion paper in August 2007.

This strategic plan was approved by the Australian Transport Council (ATC) at its meeting in February 2008.

The NTC's strategic planning process seeks to consider dimensions of the 'transport challenges' facing Australia, including managing transport growth, maintaining business cost competitiveness, reducing (safety and environmental) external costs, and contributing to improved community living standards.

In recognition of these significant national challenges, ATC also agreed in February 2008 to support a national approach to transport policy. A number of working groups, led by Transport Ministers, will report back to the next Council meeting in May 2008:

- Economic Framework for Efficient Transportation Marketplace (NSW)
- Infrastructure Planning and Investment (VIC)
- Capacity Constraints and Supply Chain Performance (SA)
- Urban Congestion (VIC)
- Climate Change, Environment and Energy (WA)
- Safety and Security (QLD)
- Strategic Research and Technology (TAS)
- Workforce Planning and Skills (NT)
- Social Inclusion (ACT)
- Governance (Commonwealth).

The NTC's existing work program is centred on developing and promoting regulatory and operational transport reforms and is closely aligned to the National Transport Policy Framework and Council of Australian Governments (COAG) reform agendas.

NTC Strategic Directions

The NTC's proposed strategic directions are as follows:

ECONOMIC FRAMEWORK FOR EFFICIENT TRANSPORTATION MARKETPLACE	
Continue to promote adoption of performance and risk-based regulatory approaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ <i>Performance-focused, risk-based approaches enable technological innovation and can more readily acknowledge and exploit the heterogeneous nature of the existing operating environment.</i> <p>This is important if Australia is to be successful in taking advantage of the maximum capacity of existing infrastructure and operational assets.</p>
Pursue pricing frameworks to correct market failures as an alternative to prescriptive regulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ <i>The NTC will continue its role in the determination of heavy vehicles charges, making progressive improvements to the methodology that is applied.</i> ❖ <i>The NTC will continue to explore and the potential to utilise market-based approaches to manage the allocation of resources in the transport sector.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This will include the investigation of appropriate pricing frameworks for access to infrastructure services and the consideration of externalities and community service obligations.
Make progressive improvements to existing prescriptive forms of regulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ <i>To enable productivity, safety and environmental improvements in the performance of transport equipment, progressive changes to existing prescriptive law will be needed.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The application of performance-focused and risk-based regulatory approaches cannot be feasibly applied to all parts of the transport industry. It will not serve, nor was it intended, as a replacement for prescriptive regulations applied to the general equipment fleet that have access to all parts of the network. • Progressive changes to prescriptive law will aim to take advantage of improved knowledge (borne from practice) about infrastructure and/or equipment capabilities and performance.
GOVERNANCE	
Facilitate and support coordinated decision making between governments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ <i>The NTC will continue to pursue coordination mechanisms for decision making across States and Territories as a means of standardising regulatory judgements (e.g. PBS Review Panel, Rail Safety Regulator Panel implementation of Section 36 of model Rail Safety Bill).</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A move to performance-focused and risk-based regulatory approaches necessarily introduces more need for regulatory judgement. • This characteristic of risk-based regulation introduces the potential for inconsistencies to manifest between jurisdictions. • Transparency and predictability of when and why regulatory requirements might need to be different is essential to maintain business confidence.

<p>Champion policy integration of all levers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ <i>The NTC should champion policy integration at every opportunity.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiatives such as performance-based standards for heavy vehicles, model compliance and enforcement legislation, heavy vehicle mass distance charging and application of monitoring technologies, are of most significance when they work together. • The benefits of these reforms are amplified further when coordinated with the application of other government 'levers' such as infrastructure investment and land use planning.
<p>SAFETY & SECURITY</p>	
<p>Develop and enable application of 'Smart' compliance measures</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ <i>The refinement of the compliance framework and the development and adoption of new best practice and technology-based tools is a necessity to make new regulatory arrangements effective.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is particularly important when moving to adopt a more performance-focused risk-based regulatory approach that exploits the heterogeneous nature of the existing operating environment. Compliance measures need to be tailored to the specifics of the proposed application, considered in a proactive manner and recommended only after careful consideration of the benefits and costs of proposals.
<p>STRATEGIC RESEARCH</p>	
<p>Research transport issues and options</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ <i>The NTC, on behalf of ATC, and in consultation with the Strategic Research and Technology Working Group, should invest in the research that is required to better understand available options to improve safety and the effects of transport activities on the environment. Specifically, research needs to focus on better understanding the effectiveness of potential options and the associated compliance issues and costs.</i>

The COAG/ATC Reform Agenda

The NTC has pursued an agenda that is closely aligned with and prioritised by the broader COAG reform agenda for transport. This has included an emphasis on specific productivity initiatives and pricing reform. With a number of those milestones now being achieved, it is timely that the NTC agenda is reviewed to ensure alignment with the ATC's current National Transport Policy Framework reform agenda.

Priorities for 2008/09 to 2010/11

A significant proportion of the NTC's available budget in 2008/09 is necessarily dedicated to the completion of reforms currently being developed or implemented. Indeed, the NTC has, at the request of stakeholders, significantly raised its profile in the implementation phase of agreed reforms.

The proposed program content and priorities for the coming year is based on a comprehensive assessment of consultation and comments received by stakeholders. In particular, there is a strong view that the NTC increases its focus on rail productivity initiatives and the efficiency of the overall logistics chain.

Having regard for the above comments, the priorities for new reform proposals are indicated in the following table.

HIGH PRIORITY	2009/10 OR BEYOND
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Road Management Framework ▪ Facilitate the development and maintenance of an ATC transport vision and policy* ▪ Identify Best Practices Models in Supply Chain Collaboration ▪ Identifying measures to abate freight greenhouse emissions ▪ Improve vehicle fuel efficiency ▪ Provision for rail productivity reform projects** ▪ Road Safety Charter Development ▪ Enforcement Guidelines to Support Improved Safety at Level Crossings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cross portfolio coordination and opportunities for consolidation of regulatory functions ▪ Compliance and Enforcement: vehicle standards provisions ▪ Pilot of OLA Process (safety) ▪ National Transport Safety Group Support ▪ Use of Commercial Relationship to Influence Specific Safety Standards ▪ Short duration static test for bus seat belts




*The management and funding of more comprehensive studies and associated work on a comprehensive transport vision are assumed to be dependent on the deliberations of ATC.

** At the time of preparation of this plan, work is in progress on the identification of productivity initiatives for the rail sector. Advice will be circulated to governments on the findings of that work in late 2007-08. A provision of \$200,000 has been made in the proposed program for commencement of work on agreed priorities.

NTC Draft Work Programme 2008–09

ACTIVITY						PROJECTS	KEY MILESTONES / DELIVERABLES IN 2008–09
DESCRIPTION	2008–09	2009–10	2010–11	2011–12	2012–13		
Economic Framework for Efficient Transportation Marketplace							
Facilitate use of safe high productivity heavy vehicles utilising a performance-based approach to heavy vehicle regulation	→					Implementation of PBS regulatory framework	Coordinate implementation of performance-based regulatory system, including proposals for longer term operation of PBS Review Panel
	→					Coordinate the completion of the mapping of the PBS network	Report to ATC on the finalisation of the of PBS network
	→					Completion of model legislation to enable PBS arrangements	Submit to ATC model legislation
	→					Develop proposals for pavement and bridge infrastructure standards that optimise use of existing infrastructure	Develop infrastructure standards for submission to ATC
Develop mechanisms to support productivity initiatives	→					Heavy Vehicle Mass Management	Submit guidelines for the operation of truck-trailers for ATC approval
	→						Submit recommendations for on-board mass monitoring and road friendly suspension strategy to ATC
	→						Submit final report on implementation of approved Quad Axle policy
Continue development of practical systems for road pricing following outcome of Productivity Commission inquiry	→					Costing data	Co-ordinate data collection and analysis to support implementation of outcomes of Productivity Commission
	→					COAG pricing directives	Continue policy development as agreed by ATC
Develop effective national approaches for compliance with transport laws	→					Compliance Bill and Intelligent Access Program implementation	Complete implementation of Intelligent Access Program and compliance and enforcement reforms

ACTIVITY						PROJECTS	KEY MILESTONES / DELIVERABLES IN 2008-09
DESCRIPTION	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13		
Capacity Constraints and Supply Chain Performance							
Contribute to the improvement in transport productivity						Support the improvement of productivity in rail	Commence work on agreed rail productivity initiatives
						Mapping 'nationally significant' supply chains	Report to ATC to improve understanding of government's role and actions to optimise supply chains
Safety and Security							
Establish fitness for duty initiatives for road and rail transport						Fatigue implementation	Coordinate implementation of approved regulatory approach to managing heavy vehicle driver fatigue
						Medical standards	Review and update road and rail Health Assessment Guidelines
						Electronic record keeping	Submission to ATC of guidelines for electronic record keeping for heavy vehicle drivers
Develop national approaches to Land Transport Safety for road and rail transport						Rail safety legislation	Complete implementation of rail model legislation and report on the effectiveness of the implementation program
							Submit proposals for level crossing enforcement guidelines
						Heavy Vehicle Safety	Coordinate the Heavy Vehicle Safety Strategy
						Heavy Vehicle Braking	Finalise Heavy Vehicle Braking Strategy
						Road Safety Charter	Submit a proposed national Road Safety Charter for ATC approval
Develop effective national approaches for compliance with transport laws						Heavy Vehicle Safety Benchmarking	Continue to lead the OECD Heavy Vehicle safety Benchmarking Study
						Accreditation review and implementation	Coordinate implementation of approved recommendations of accreditation review
						Bus Accreditation	Develop a policy proposal for accreditation of bus operators

ACTIVITY						PROJECTS	KEY MILESTONES / DELIVERABLES IN 2008–09
DESCRIPTION	2008–09	2009–10	2010–11	2011–12	2012–13		
Environment and Energy							
Land Transport Environment						Motor Vehicle Efficiency	Commence work on agreed actions to improve motor vehicle efficiency
						Freight in a carbon constrained environment	Commence work on agreed actions from report on “Freight in a carbon constrained environment”
Governance							
Maintain agreed reforms, monitor issues relating to existing reforms and consistency of implementation, review existing reforms on a regular basis and evaluate the effectiveness of the land transport regulatory reform programme	Ongoing					Maintenance, review and evaluation projects	Packages of amendments made to established reforms, including Dangerous Goods, Australian Road Rules, Heavy Vehicle Registration and Driver Licensing, Australian Vehicle Standards Rules Reviews undertaken for reforms five and ten years after implementation
Well coordinated national transport reform						NTC Review	Contribute to the formal review of the NTC
Strategic Research and Technology							
Strategic planning	Ongoing					Identify priorities for future NTC reforms ATC Transport Vision and Policy	Business cases and scoping work as identified, including investigation of regulatory impediments to efficient and safe passenger transport Support ATC initiatives to develop and maintain a national transport vision and policy

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